

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)  
of  
Citizen Reporting Portal**

**‘Violence against children is no longer tolerated’**

**Child Protection Sector  
Save the Children**

## **PART-A**

CP	Child Protection
CRP	Citizen Reporting Portal
CRACinB	Child Rights Advocacy Coalition in Bangladesh
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
GO	Governmental organization
GO	Government Organisation
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
RBA	Rights Based Approach
MSS	Manabik Shahajya Sangstha
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SW	Social Worker
SCI	Save the Children International
SJ	Shishuder Jonno
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UN	United Nations
VAC	Violence Against Children
WHO	World Health Organisations

## DEFINITION

**Child:** It is defined as any human being under the age of 18 years<sup>1</sup>

**Child Abuse:** <sup>2</sup>Child Abuse consists of anything which individuals, institutions or processes do or fail to do which directly or indirectly harms children or damages their prospect of safe and healthy development into adulthood. The main categories of abuse are defined by WHO as Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Neglect and Negligent Treatment, Sexual Abuse.

- **Physical Abuse:** involves the use of violent physical force so as to cause actual or likely physical injury or suffering, (e.g. hitting, shaking, burning, female genital mutilation, torture.).<sup>3</sup>
- **Emotional or psychological abuse:** <sup>4</sup>includes humiliating and degrading treatment such as bad name calling, constant criticism, belittling, persistent shaming, solitary confinement and isolation)
- **Sexual Abuse:** includes all forms of sexual violence including incest, early and forced marriage, rape, involvement in pornography, and sexual slavery. Child sexual abuse may also include indecent touching or exposure, using sexually explicit language towards a child and showing children pornographic material.<sup>5</sup>
- **Neglect:** Deliberately, or through carelessness or negligence, failing to provide for, or secure for a child, their rights to physical safety and development. <sup>6</sup>
- **Exploitation:** Economic (harmful child labour defined by the government), social, cultural, religious. <sup>7</sup>Children should be protected from any activity that takes advantage of them or could harm their welfare and development.

**Protection from all forms of violence:** <sup>8</sup>Children have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, physically or mentally. Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for and protect them from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents, or anyone else who looks after them. In terms of discipline, the Convention does not specify what forms of punishment parents should use. However any form of discipline involving violence is unacceptable. There are ways to discipline children that are effective in helping children learn about family and social expectations for their behavior – ones that are non-violent, are appropriate to the child's level of development and take the best interests of the child into consideration. In most countries, laws already define what sorts of punishments are considered excessive or abusive. It is up to each government to review these laws in light of the Convention.

**Child Protection (CP):** Save the Children defines child protection as measures and structures to prevent and respond to abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence affecting children. <sup>9</sup>

**Confidentiality:** Confidentiality is the protection of personal information of the survivors. In this SOP defines confidentiality is keeping a child survivors information between the related staff/Social Worker/Manager of partner organizations and Save the Children and the organizations affiliated with the

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<sup>1</sup> UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 and Bangladesh Children Act 2013

<sup>2</sup> Save the Children's Resource Centre, Global Theme, Child Protection

<sup>3</sup> Save the Children's Resource Centre, published on 02.04.2016 under the Global Theme, Child Protection

<sup>4</sup> Save the Children's Resource Centre, published on 02.04.2016 under the Global Theme, Child Protection

<sup>5</sup> Save the Children's Resource Centre, published on 02.04.2016 under the Global Theme, Child Protection

<sup>6</sup> Save the Children's Resource Centre, Global Theme, Child Protection

<sup>7</sup> Definition- according to article 36 (**other forms of exploitation**) of UNCRC

<sup>8</sup> Definition- according to article 19 of UNCRC

<sup>9</sup> Save the Children's Resource Centre, Global Theme, Child Protection

reporting process. This will refer not telling others including co-workers, community peoples, law enforcement agencies, friends, family, etc. **As whole, confidentiality means- 'information is not made available or disclosed to unauthorized individuals, entities, systems or processes'.**

**Child Rights Approach:** Child rights approach is based on every child's non-negotiable right to be protected and cared for – ideally by their family or in a family setting, at school. Children are not victims in need of assistance, but rights-holders entitled to respect.<sup>10</sup>

**Social Worker (SW):** This term refers to the person who has the day-to-day responsibility for managing and implementing the public awareness in a particular group. SW also lead role in either providing care or co-coordinating the efforts to collecting information/cases of violence against children and do verification of reported cases and will provide inputs in the web portal as necessary.

“Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work.”<sup>11</sup>

**Violence Against Children (VAC):**“The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against a child, by an individual or group, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity.”<sup>12</sup>

Violence can be committed by individuals or by the State as well as groups and organizations through their members and their policies. It results not only in fear of/ or actual injury but also in fundamental interference with personal freedom.

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<sup>10</sup> Save the Children's Resource Centre, published on 02.04.2016 under the Global Theme, Child Protection

<sup>11</sup> Global definition of social work profession, approved by the IFSW General Meeting and the IASSW General Assembly in July 2014

<sup>12</sup> Definition of WHO in the World Report on Violence and Health published 2002:

## **I. INTRODUCTION OF SOP**

### **I.1 Background:**

'Violence against children is no longer tolerated'- is one of the breakthroughs of Save the Children (SCi). Citizen Reporting Portal (CRP) will be contributing to achieve this breakthrough through utilizing web based communication technology for assembling violence against children information with involvement of different stakeholders. Shishuder Jonno (SJ) Program and Child Protection sector of SCi have been piloting (May-2016-Arril 2017) this project with Manabik Shahajya Sangstha-(MSS) to implement this at Rayerbazar, Dhaka as an existing partner of SJ Program. mPower is providing technical support to SCi for development of the portal. Based on the learnings from piloting SCi intended to expand this reporting portal with the support of Child Rights Advocacy Coalition in Bangladesh members and their alliances around the country. The data generated through citizen reporting portal will help in raising the profile of violence against children agenda nationally and locally. Coalition will also use this data and information for further advocacy. International standards and laws especially, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), its protocols and Bangladesh Children Act 2013 law related to the protection of children need to mention has been focused through a comprehensive Child Rights-based approach to reporting case in the web portal.

### **I.2 Objective of the SOP:**

To assist for conceptual understanding and functioning of the Citizen Reporting Portal especially, those are addressing child protection issues. This Portal will encompass SOP, in relating to the following:

- Planning a proper reporting and operational system with assistance of other stakeholders or case reporting mechanisms & process are prescriptive for the users of actions involved and they can select those measures that would contribute to the effective handling of a particular case
- Validation of incident reporting of violence against children
- Process of maintaining confidentiality of information for the child survivors and information related to incident
- Use of Information
- Referral System (after receiving cases)
- Follow up Mechanism and
- Including several measures in a step-by-step process with answering four questions: such as 1) WHAT is to be done or HOW should the action be executed? 2) WHEN is action to be taken? 3) WHO should be involved etc.

## 2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND CONSIDERATIONS OF THE SOP

A set of norms which are considered best practice in the guiding principles for this SOP. The guiding principles were developed following different International Standards such as Save the Children's working practices, and mainly in line with the Convention on the Rights of Children and rights for working with individual survivors and Children. Basically, acknowledges the rights of children and their rights to be protected, treated with respect, listened/collected to and to have their own views taken into consideration for any violence against children cases. Following **Principles and Considerations** are:

**2.1 Child Safeguarding Policy (CSP) of SCi:** CSP is focus in all activities done by save the children. All personnel and associates of SCi and who works for us upholding and promoting high standards of conduct CSP and all are is committed to protect, fulfil and respect children's rights.

**2.2 Non-Discrimination:** It is a fundamental principle of 'National and International law'<sup>13</sup>. This principle is especially important for children, because they may not have the same opportunities of challenging the discrimination in the same way an adult would. In many situations, it is common for some groups to receive less attention than others. In the cases of violence against children sometimes, stigmatising as a group is often used as a way to justifying treating them badly or to deny them their rights. It is also often seen as 'not deserving help' and to blame themselves especially, for girl's child as the cause of their own negative situation. Considering all, it is a fundamental principle of Citizen Reporting Portal.

**2.3 Best Interest of the Child:** When implementing CRP, must apply 'the best interest of the child' principle.<sup>14</sup> It should be 'a primary consideration' and applies to all matters that affecting children and taken into account in the decision-making process. An assessment which will be a multi-disciplinary exercise of best interests shall be based on the individual circumstances of each child and must consider his/her family situation; particular vulnerabilities; safety and risks s/he is exposed to and her/his protection needs; and her/his mental and physical health, education and socio-economic conditions. Save the Children and its Partner Organizations should be guided by a principle of 'do no harm' or 'best interests' in all their actions. Besides, a primary consideration in all actions concerning potential children who is victim of violations.

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<sup>13</sup> UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 2; Constitution of Bangladesh, Article 28, Children (draft) Rules 2016, paragraph 3 (b)

<sup>14</sup> UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 3 (1)

**2.4 Maintain Confidentiality/Data Protection:** The survivors information and data will be carefully collecting, exchanging, processing and stored for specified and legitimate purposes shall not be used in a way incompatible with those purposes to ensure the long-term safety and security of survivor child. Informed consent to use their data would be invariably obtained.

**2.5 Civil Society, child rights networks, coalition, alliances and Community Participation:** Competent NGOs and associations shall be active contributors in the violence against children at the local, regional and national levels. They will play a crucial role as service providers in supporting survivor children in the process of data collection, identification through maintain confidentiality of survivor cases.

**2.6 Accountability and Transparency:** Necessary complaint procedures to raise complaints for child rights violations at any stage of their identification and assistance process have been provided.

**2.7 Capacity Building:** Enhancing the skills of children, community people and related staff members through awareness raising on violence against children.

This Standard Operating Procedure will reflect the ideas outlined in the above principles will help both Social Workers and Service Users to have a better understanding of what supports is required of them and how they are expected to case reporting to certain situations

### **3. STEPS OF THE STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP) FOR 'CITIZEN REPORTING PORTAL' (CRP)**

This section is mainly defined about the administration and functioning process of this web-based Citizen Reporting Portal. So a clear information has given in all steps for reporting cases of survivors of child abuse and violence against children. The name of the web site portal is <http://www.crpscibd.org/crp/> and the dashboard login users name is <http://27.147.138.57:8899/secure/login> or <http://dev.mpower-social.com:8899/secure/login> for assembling of abuse & violence against children cases. It will be collecting all types of case for survivors of violence against children such as physical, mental and humiliating abuse, victim of child marriage, child trafficking, eve teasing, rape, exploitation and so on.

**3.1 Initial/primary information collection of survivors:** The initial information collection should be based on a set of questions/content to determine if the child is a presumed survivor of violence cases as soon as s/he gets in touch with the first point of notification. During the process it

is also important to pay attention to the health condition of the child survivor and look for any sign of abuse (all forms of abuse as defined in the SOP) like injury marks on the body or even through observation of their body language or behaviour which might suggest a case of survivor of violence against children. At the same time it is also take in account to required assistance related to law enforce bodies, school management, local administration etc. In piloting phase Social Worker (SW) will collect primary information and open a case file with detail information. SW will be visiting the place and survivors or parents/relatives immediately after collecting primary information of any incident of violence against children in the impact area and will fill up the Intake Form/Case Assessment Format. As per the system of case management sometimes it is required to collect information again and again during verification of case. On that time same 'Intake Form' will be utilizing in step by step with mentioning number such 1-2-3 or more.

The means of primary information collection of survivors could be in following:

- Any person from anywhere such as- parents or family members, relatives, neighbor, health care professionals, journalists, teachers, community leaders and representatives of local Government etc.
- Through direct statement of the survivors
- Eye witness (who have seen the incident on spot)
- From reliable sources such as Community Based Child Protection Committee (CBCPC) members/stakeholders of Citizen Reporting Portal, other NGOs/CBOs, NCTF members and members from Child Rights Advocacy Coalition
- Through electronic media or social media, newspapers etc.
- SW collects directly the initial information of incident through one to one meeting/in-depth interview with the survivors or her/his parents/relatives/neighbors, awareness raising workshop/meeting/seminar or from Reflection Centre's (RC) in the piloting area
- Government Child Helpline Centre (1098/10921) or local police/law enforcement agencies etc.

**Time Frame:** As soon as possible after getting the information of incident

**Tools:** Primary information/Intake Format (**Annex I**)

**Responsible:** Social Worker, Manobik Shahajjo Sangstha (MSS) at Rayerbazar, Dhaka.

**3.2 Consent Form/Informed Consent:** Survivors or parent/legal guardian must receive and signed 'Consent Form' before reporting case. If the survivor and her/his parent or legal guardian cannot read and write in that situation an informed consent statement will be read up to the survivor and a verbal consent will be obtained. The survivor should have the option to provide limited consent where they

can choose which information is going to be uploading or released and which is kept confidential. The purpose of informed consent is that the survivor understands what s/he is consenting and agreeing to. Social worker will be consulting and given all the information needed to make an informed decision using child-friendly interview techniques that encourage them to express themselves. Their ability to provide consent on the use of the information and the credibility of the information will depend on their age, maturity and ability to express themselves freely.

**NOTE: Consent Form is not mandatory for those especially, who will be directly sending report through online system (as mass people). But Social Worker can use this as per the CP case management system.**

**Time Frame:** Before reporting as case in the portal and filling up hard copies as incident case of CP

**Tools:** Consent Form (**Annex 2**)

**Responsible:** Social Worker is responsible for sharing inform to survivors/ parents regarding consent of case reporting (If SW gets the information by other person then s/he will do it while verification of case).

**3.3 Age determination of survivor:** The age of a child survivor should be verified by seeing birth certificate/birth registration card/school certificates etc. If there is no birth certificate then physical appearance & psychological maturity should be following with asking to the survivors or parents or by her/his statements, or to check medical examination including verification tests if necessary. The social worker will be questioning to the children in a child-sensitive approach through a formal assessment process.

**Time Frame:** During the case collection & verification of survivors

**Tools:** Age determination Format (**Annex 3**)

**Responsible:** Social Worker

**3.4 Uploading case in the portal:** After collecting information of incident it will be uploading in the portal as case.

**Time Frame:** As soon as Possible/ one day after collecting primary information

**Tools:** Primary information of case in the portal

**Responsible:** Social Worker

**3.5 Verification of case:** After reporting any form of abuse or violence against children as case in the portal then it will be reviewed by SCi Manager. S/he will send for verification of case through the system of web-portal. There is an option in the reporting system for verification of cases depends to SCi which NGO will be working on it. However, in piloting phase only MSS is working as partner NGO therefore, SCi will provide the responsibility only to MSS which verification will be done by social worker under supervision of Manager MSS in existing system of web-based portal. Thus, social worker will verify information for authenticity of repeating the incident or other issues. It should be considering by source of information and authentication of the case or information is doubtful or

there are obvious gaps etc. And all activities will be done considering 'Child Safe Guarding Policy' of Save the Children during verification of information by community people/clients/NGO staff/news media/survivors or other clients. A minimum check list for verification of cases are following:

- Identify current and potential sources of risk to the survivors
- Mandatory to verify any kind of proof/evidence such as family photographs or any other adequate documents (Birth certificate or identification of document) of the survivor.
- Check consistency of the information such as date, time, place and the person's reaction, related to school or education, relationship with members and reconfirm the relationships with the survivor as well
- Verify the survivors relationships with the family members, schools, (if study), community stakeholder about the incident. But ensure about child's safety (as per CSP)
- Though verification process will be done by a set structured format to record the findings. But it is not limited to the format, follow up is carried out via phone or collecting information by reliable sources or is limited to a few questions to the child about his or her wellbeing.
- Consider how serious the situation is or how well the child survivor is functioning in the circumstances
- Maintain children's age, gender, religion, ethnicity and background affects the way they experienced and understand what has happened to survivors this is very important while verifying information from the child survivors
- Identify gaps in the information by physical visiting the area or cross checked the data/information
- Check this with the key informants and address ethical considerations
- Reach useful explanations for the situation
- Make final check against the use of information from intake form
- Develop further explanations and list the ways in which they can be tested.

**Time Frame:** within 30 working days

**Tools:** Detail Assessment form (Annex 6)

**Responsible:** Manager of partner organization

**3.6 Maintain Confidentiality:** It is required sharing to the child survivors and their parent/family members/relatives at the beginning of first contact or meeting that whatever they share/tell to the social worker/NGO official which will be kept as confidential information. Therefore, after collecting or getting any information about child abuse or violence against children through community

peoples/parents of survivors /neighbour or directly from the child survivor it will be preserving as primary data. And collected information will be preserving as 'confidential' information. Case worker/Social worker/field worker or related officials those are responsible for dealing the case should be maintain confidentiality or privacy of all subjects of survivors of violence against children.

**As per reference of confidentiality related legislations:**<sup>15</sup> “Discloser of Confidentiality- regarding this Act or otherwise provided any other law for the time being in force unless there is a person, the provisions of this Act or any rules or regulations made there under or any electronic record, book, register, correspondence, information, document or other content access to in other information, without the consent of the person concerned, any electronic record, book, register, correspondence, information, document or other content expressed to another person, then it will be done is a crime. An electronic record, book, register, correspondence, information, document or other content expressed to another person, then it will be done is a crime”.

(I) any person under sub-section (II) commits an offense under imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years, or a fine not exceeding two hundred thousand rupees, or both shall be punished.

### 3.7 Dealing Sensitive Information:

- Social worker/related staff members will make sure that what information must be shared and what should be kept as confidential information
- Information will share with them who only has given to authorized people/department who need it to make decisions regarding the response or care of a specific child survivor. Some information should be shared with all caregivers, NGOs but changing actual name, address, phone numbers of survivors and due to security concern
- Written information will be keeping in a safe place at partners office/SCi office. Personal information should not be left lying around for other survivors/parents or staff members to see. Some information (such as social security numbers) should be in a locked file cabinet in the office
- No one will gossip/ share the information in a concise and informative manner with the people who need to be informed
- While social worker is needed to be discussing regarding survivor and their situation in supervision or in a training session/workshop in that time actual name and other information should have to be changed for safety of survivor. Other related officials, workers in these

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<sup>15</sup>Information, Communication Technology (ICT) Act (Reviewed)2016, 39 no law, clause no 63

situations are also bound by the same ethical and legal requirements relating to maintain confidentiality.

**Time Frame:** Ongoing process

**Tools:** Check list for maintain confidentiality (Annex 7)

**Responsible:** Social Worker and all related persons to the case

### **3.8 Mechanism for referral services of survivor:**

There are no service delivery system in the Citizen Reporting Portal program. The implementing partner (MSS) will be doing a mapping for referral services and will establish a mechanism with at least seven institutes/hospitals & community health clinics/law enforcement agencies/shelter homes/schools/legal/counselling services etc. Social worker will be starting initial communication and will collect name of organization/institute with contact person. After that management level staff of partner NGO will be finalizing the referral mechanisms by written documents/MoU/formal letter or any other official form.

The member of CBCPC will also be taken the responsibilities for referral services through developing adequate capacity on Child Protection. Before the referral services, it is required a complete 'Case Assessment' in order to getting the real needs of the children such as health for example injury or administrative related support then it will be referred to related NGOs/hospitals/police departments based on the 'Referral Directory' by mapping. In that point social worker or entry points will be accessible, safe, private, confidential, and trustworthy.

**Time Frame:** While required

**Tools:** Referral system form (Annex 8)

**Responsible:** Social Worker and senior management staff of partner NGO

### **3.9 Advocacy with government for action take:**

Incident report of violence against children will be using for advocacy purpose with government stakeholders to address the issue appropriately and protection of children as well. Child Rights Advocacy Coalition (CRAC) in Bangladesh will address the issue in appropriate way to concern government stakeholders through set up different advocacy mechanisms. It will also way out to strategic collaboration with the related government stakeholders.

**Time Frame:** In piloting phase

**Tools:**

**Responsible:**

***NOTE:*** This Standard Operating Procedure will be revised six monthly basis based on the recommendations from the relevant stakeholders.